

Alabama Public Libraries



Functional Analysis & Records Disposition Authority

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Local Government
Records Commission
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Functional and Organizational Analysis of Alabama Public Libraries

Sources of Information

Representatives of the Alabama Public Library Service

Representatives of Local Public Libraries

Alabama Administrative Code, Chapters 520-1-1 through 520-6-1 (2000).

Alabama Public Library Service. *50 Years of Serving: Alabama Public Library Service, 1939-1989* (1989).

Code of Alabama 1975, Sections 11-90-1 through -4; 41-8-1 through -10.

“Laws Governing the Department of Archives and History.” *State of Alabama. Department of Archives and History. Bulletin No. 4* (1907).

Owen, Thomas McAdory. *History of Alabama and Dictionary of Alabama Biography* (1921).

Solinet. “The Alabama Virtual Library is Here!” *SoliNEWS* (Fall 2000).

Historical Context

Initially “in Alabama, the concept of public library service . . . was something done on a volunteer basis for a limited clientele.” Library development in the 20th century followed a course similar to that of other social services, moving gradually “from the concept of volunteer/benevolent activity to an agency that merited the support of the governmental body.” (Unless otherwise cited, quotations are from the APLS pamphlet *50 Years of Serving*.) The history of Alabama’s libraries really “began with the Alabama Federation of Women’s Clubs [AFWC],” which by 1900 was operating 12 traveling libraries for “any women’s club, school, or community” that requested them and could pay a dollar to cover transportation costs.

In 1905, the federation turned over its “1,700 books, nine bookcases, and \$9.81” to the Alabama Library Association, which had been established in Montgomery a year earlier. Dr. Thomas Owen—founder and director of the Alabama Department of Archives and History (ADAH)—also became the new association’s president. His avowed purpose was the “promotion of libraries and library interest in Alabama” (Owen, vol. II, p. 877); and most of the state’s existing public, school, and academic libraries eventually joined. Not surprisingly, Dr. Owen managed to have the leading role assigned to his department. Under legislation passed in 1907 (Act 255), the state archives was made responsible for encouraging and assisting “in the establishment of public and school libraries,” improving and strengthening “those already in existence,” and giving advice “to libraries and library workers in administration [and library] methods and economy.” It also began to conduct “a system of traveling libraries” that incorporated those previously dispatched by the AFWC.

Even with a state infrastructure now in place, Alabama’s club women remained active in support of public libraries. By 1924, they were pressing counties and municipalities for money to fund “free public libraries” made possible by recent legislation (see the Code of Alabama 1975, Sections 11-90-1 through 4). Library construction was materially assisted by the Carnegie Foundation, which built new facilities in ten Alabama cities before 1921 (Owen, vol. II, pp. 876-77). By the late 1930s, as

public libraries continued to proliferate, the AFWC was calling for a stronger mechanism of state oversight responsibility. "To accomplish this objective, resolutions were drawn by almost every federated [women's] club in the state, telegrams were sent, legislators were interviewed, a shower of postcards was sent." Leaving no stone unturned, the AFWC's president "persuaded each candidate for governor to sign such a bill if it passed" the legislature. The result of this campaign was the creation, in 1939, of a Public Library Service Division (PLSD) of the Alabama Department of Archives and History (ADAH). While remaining under ADAH jurisdiction, the new division operated autonomously in assisting public libraries. Not until 1959 did it achieve full independence as the Alabama Public Library Service (APLS).

APLS, of course, has its own story (as well as its own RDA); but after 1939 the development of Alabama's public libraries cannot be separated from it. The division's first director, Lois Ranier Green, had as her goal establishing "a library in every county." At first, the federal Works Progress Administration (WPA) provided buildings, books, and a large percentage of her salary. World War II soon swallowed up that source of funding, and public libraries remained a low priority for several years. Ms. Green persevered, converting surplus ambulances to bookmobiles and persuading county governments to spend money on libraries as well as roads. She was aided by the broadening horizons of a global war (people "wanted to know about the places their children were being sent to fight") and by more accessible technology, as electricity became commonplace and Alabamians began to read at night. Nevertheless, progress remained gradual and intermittent. After receiving a paltry \$10,000 in state appropriations between 1939 and 1943, the PLSD got a windfall four times that large in 1944. "By 1953 [the year Ms. Green retired], there were 17 countywide libraries, five regional, and 49 municipal libraries." However, 15 counties still lacked a public library at all, and local spending on libraries surpassed the state's by a margin of almost 9-1.

During the following decade, evolving social policies allowed Alabama's libraries to benefit from a renewal of federal support. In 1956, Congress passed a Library Service Act (sponsored by Alabama's Senator Lister Hill and Congressman Carl Elliott) to promote the development of small libraries for rural localities. "Under LSA funding, expenditures for public libraries would rise from 34 cents . . . to 68 cents per capita . . . 10 bookmobiles would be added to serve remote areas; 24 counties would participate in establishment grants; and 63 independent libraries would be established." Other kinds of federal intervention cast Alabama in a less flattering light, as when a children's book about "the marriage of a white and a black rabbit" disappeared from library shelves after patrons complained it was "pro-integration." Despite the era's social problems, economic progress for libraries continued under a 1965 extension of the LSA. New facilities were built through federal grants administered by APLS. "Library service was extended to correctional institutions and a public library was established for the blind and physically handicapped."

Under the directorship of Elizabeth Beamguard (1960-1975), the now-independent APLS embarked on an ambitious program of education for librarians, offering workshops, in-service training, scholarships, and graduate degrees. State appropriations for public libraries increased throughout the 1970s and '80s, and they were more than matched by federal assistance. In 1988, "nearly \$811,000" in federal money were distributed to Alabama's libraries under the Library Services and Construction Act (LSCA), which (as amended in 1990) provided three categories of grant funding: Title I extended services to disadvantaged Alabamians (such as the elderly, institutionalized, physically

handicapped, and illiterate); Title II funded library construction and renovation projects; and Title III assisted projects to “develop and strengthen interlibrary cooperation [and] resource sharing.” Subsequently, the Library Services Technology Act (1996) targeted “underserved urban and rural communities” and children “from families with incomes below the poverty line” for additional financial support. However, the LSTA’s primary goal was to “promote library services that provide all users [with] access to information through State, regional, national, and international electronic networks.” Through APLS, grants were made available for Alabama libraries “to acquire or share computer systems and telecommunications technologies” (Alabama Administrative Code, Chapter 520-2-1).

Under this impetus, the end of the millennium saw APLS spearheading “a cooperative statewide effort among librarians, educators, Governor Don Siegelman, and a grassroots campaign by the public” to obtain \$3 million in legislative funding for the Alabama Virtual Library, which began operation in the year 2000. The Virtual Library is expected to provide “every public school child, every student in a two-year or four-year college, and every public library patron in the state [with] access to thousands of reliable resources online, including full-text magazine articles, electronic reference books, encyclopedias, medical information, statistical sources, and homework aids” (Solinet, *SoliNEWS* [Fall 2000], p. 13). While such technological sophistication may diminish the traditional roles of books and buildings (and even librarians themselves), it is a measure of how far Alabama’s public libraries have come since the early days of women’s clubs and bookmobiles.

Agency Organization

Alabama’s 217 public libraries range in size from multi-departmental metropolitan systems, with branches in numerous localities and teams of professional librarians, to tiny local libraries staffed by part-time volunteers. All libraries must possess at least “a basic collection of materials, a regular staffing level, and an established service schedule” (Alabama Administrative Code, Chapter 520-2-2). Under the Code of Alabama 1975, Sections 11-90-1 through -4, independent libraries are supervised by a board of five members appointed by the governing body. The board is responsible for “electing” a library director and other employees, ensuring the provision of service, and overseeing the library’s operations and finances. A master’s degree in library science is not mandatory for directors, as APLS is authorized to “advise as to the proper qualifications of librarians” (Code of Alabama 1975, Section 41-8-5).

In Chapter 520-2-2, the Alabama Administrative Code establishes additional requirements that public libraries must meet to qualify for federal assistance. These include holding board meetings at least four times a year; having written by-laws and operations policies; sending the director twice annually to APLS-sponsored in-service training; and submitting to APLS a five-year plan (with annual updates) for meeting its community’s information needs, expanding capital, and developing collections and staff. The library must also meet federal equal opportunity guidelines and maintain certain minimum operating hours, based on the size of its area of service.

Public libraries may be created and funded by either counties or municipalities. “In lieu of establishing or maintaining” its own public library, a county or municipality may contract . . . with the library board of another political unit or governmental agency” to establish “joint library service”

on mutually agreeable terms (Code of Alabama 1975, Section 11-90-4; further guidelines are provided in Section 520-2-3-.01 of the Alabama Administrative Code). Cooperation among existing libraries is, however, strictly voluntary. While six regional libraries are scattered haphazardly across the state—often providing training, purchasing supplies, storing records, or distributing state and federal funds to libraries within their region—they have no formal authority over other libraries. Under its mandate to develop “a cooperative system” of public library service (Code of Alabama 1975, Sections 41-8-1 through -10), APLS has broad oversight authority over local library operations. Even so, libraries’ participation in that agency’s consulting and grant-writing services is a matter of self-interest rather than compulsion.

Agency Functions and Subfunctions

The mandated responsibility of Alabama’s public libraries is “to provide a system of library service to be made easily available to all citizens of the county or municipality through central library, branches, stations, book trade services, or other appropriate means” (Code of Alabama 1975, Section 11-90-3). These activities relate primarily to the Public Services function defined for local government. In the performance of their mandated functions, public libraries may engage in the following subfunctions:

- **Acquiring and Maintaining Collections.** Public libraries acquire books, newspapers, microforms, and other printed or recorded media through purchase or donation. They create shelf lists and finding aids for locating and tracking these materials. Public libraries also hold items that may not be integral parts of their collections, such as reference sources, items borrowed for exhibits, materials belonging to historical or genealogical societies, or public records in the legal custody of other agencies.
- **Cataloging Collections.** Over the years, Alabama’s public libraries have cataloged their holdings (originally on cards, but more recently electronically) according to any of several standardized classification systems. Currently, most Alabama libraries share a common, automated catalog of holdings: the Alabama Interlibrary Catalog, or ALICAT (see the Alabama Administrative Code, Chapter 520-2-4).
- **Sharing Collections Information and Collections.** The Alabama Library Information Network (ALIN) establishes “a statewide cooperative information network” among local and regional public libraries, college and university libraries, and APLS. Using a WATS line, fax, or e-mail, and referencing ALICAT, they can share information on collections, direct patrons to items held by other institutions, or request items through interlibrary loan. Collections outside Alabama can be accessed through connections from ALICAT or SOLINET (the Southern Library Network) to OCLC Inc., the national on-line bibliographic database. Recently, SOLINET has become less expensive for local libraries to use, so ALICAT will be phased out within the next two years.
- **Providing Access to Collections and Reference Assistance.** Public libraries allow patrons to borrow most items in their collections, and they provide reference access to non-circulating items. Many libraries have reference departments to assist patrons with research

requests, and all now have access to the internet resources of the Alabama Virtual Library. For security and planning purposes, libraries monitor patron access to and use of their collections.

- **Assisting with Community Education and Activities.** Using funds available through Title I of the LSCA, public libraries serve as community information and referral centers (Alabama Administrative Code, Chapter 520-2-1). They provide literacy programs for adults and story hours for children; conduct or sponsor workshops, exhibits, lectures, or tours; offer space for meetings of historical and genealogical societies or senior citizens' groups; and otherwise take part in the life of the community.
- **Administering Internal Operations.** A significant portion of work at public libraries may include administrative tasks performed to support the programmatic areas. For small and medium-sized libraries, some administration of finances and personnel may be performed by the parent county or municipality. Large libraries may do this work themselves.

Managing the agency: Activities include internal office management activities common to most government agencies, such as corresponding and communicating, scheduling, meeting, documenting policy and procedures, reporting, litigating, legislating (drafting, lobbying, tracking), publicizing and providing information, managing records, and managing information systems technology.

Managing finances: Activities include budgeting (preparing and reviewing a budget package); purchasing (requisition and purchasing supplies and equipment, receipting and invoicing for goods, and authorizing payment for products received); accounting for the expenditure, encumbrance, disbursement, and reconciliation of funds within the agency's budget through a uniform system of accounting and reporting; authorizing travel; contracting with companies or individuals; bidding for products and services; assisting in the audit process; and investing.

Managing human resources: Activities include recruiting and hiring eligible individuals to fill positions within the agency; providing compensation to employees; providing benefits to employees, such as leave, health insurance, unemployment compensation, worker's compensation, injury compensation, retirement, and death benefits; supervising employees by evaluating performance, promoting, granting leave, and monitoring the accumulation of leave; training and providing continuing education for employees; and disciplining.

Managing properties, facilities, and resources: Activities include: inventorying and accounting for non-consumable property and reporting property information to the appropriate authority; constructing buildings and facilities, leasing and/or renting offices or facilities; providing security for property owned by the agency; insuring property; and assigning, inspecting and maintaining agency property, including vehicles.

Analysis of Record-Keeping Systems and Records Appraisal of Alabama Public Libraries

Agency Record-Keeping Systems

One librarian has noted that Alabama's approximately 200 independent public libraries may have 200 different record-keeping systems. If that figure seems somewhat exaggerated, there is little doubt that libraries presently are inconsistent in record-keeping practices, although avenues for a standardized approach have long existed. APLS was founded over 60 years ago to establish "a cooperative system of . . . library service" for the state. Since 1987, ALICAT has provided a standardized, statewide database for cataloging and interlibrary loan functions. Today, the Alabama Virtual Library unites APLS, public libraries, college and school libraries, and government agencies in a common research and reference network. At first glance, the "cooperative" nature of Alabama's system of library service would seem to promote uniformity in record-keeping matters.

In fact, public librarians have previously had little guidance in this area. Unlike most local government agencies, their records were never covered by LGRC retention schedules. The role of APLS has been limited by its legislative mandate: it must advise and assist but cannot regulate. For example, public libraries must report performance in such areas as acquisitions, circulation and usage, and local financing as a condition of receiving state and federal support. However, APLS may not use a library's non-compliance with reporting guidelines as a reason for denying funds. On another level, there is little consistency among public libraries in their use of ALICAT and other computerized resources. Several large libraries are rapidly converting to fully automated catalogs and holdings information, submersing their individual collections in the statewide database. Others transfer records electronically to a nearby regional library. Some libraries allow the public to access collections through their web sites, while a few retain shelf lists and card catalogs for patrons unused to new technology. In short, record-keeping at Alabama public libraries varies tremendously and depends on many factors, such as the nature of a library's holdings, its role in the community, its relationship with other libraries, and the number and qualifications of its staff.

Records Appraisal

The following is a discussion of the two major categories of records created and/or maintained by public libraries: Temporary Records and Permanent Records.

I. Temporary Records. Temporary records should be held for what is considered to be their active life and disposed of once all fiscal, legal, and administrative requirements have been met. Some of the temporary records created by local libraries are discussed below.

- **Accession/Deaccession Logs or Files (1.01).** These records list books or other items added to or removed from the library's collection. They include item descriptions and acquisition information, but not financial documentation such as purchase orders. With the advent of on-line cataloging, some libraries no longer keep accession information for their own collection up to date. While these records may sometimes have historical interest, they lack the utility and uniformity required to be appraised as permanent.

- **Donor Files (1.03).** These records document all gifts of books, other items, or money to the library by private individuals or corporations. They may include the names of donors, descriptions of donated items, reasons for donations, and correspondence with donors and donors' families. Donor files are important in establishing the provenance of donations and may help to document library collection policies and goals. Although files on individual donations lack permanent significance once the item is deaccessioned from the library, those relating to monetary donations are auditable records and are reappraised accordingly.

- **Shelf Lists and Finding Aids (1.02).** Shelf lists, usually kept as card files, are intended to provide an inventory and location index of all library holdings. They assist library staff in physically locating library items needed for circulation and research requests. Shelf lists normally include each item's accession number, description, date of acquisition, and location tracking information. Formerly, these records might have been appraised as permanent. However, small libraries often neglected to create them, and many libraries no longer keep them up to date, instead relying on location information in automated cataloging/circulation resources. The category also includes all other finding aids to library materials.

- **Cataloging Data and Card Files (2.01).** With the advent of automated cataloging, there is now (as noted above) little consistency among Alabama public libraries in the retention of cataloging information. Most libraries catalog their collections information in OCLC, the national on-line database. Holdings information is shared statewide on ALICAT. Some libraries, however, retain traditional card files ("card catalogs") for convenience or to document items that were never cataloged electronically. While data on individual holdings is by nature transitory, the presence of OCLC—or a successor automated database—should ensure that collection information for Alabama public libraries is maintained for as long as it is needed.

- **Registration Records (4.01).** "The term 'registration records' includes any information which the Alabama Public Library Service and public libraries in Alabama require a patron to provide in order to become eligible to borrow books and other materials" (Alabama Administrative Code, Chapter 520-1-1). Most libraries require prospective patrons to fill out paper applications for library cards. Some subsequently microfilm the applications or store them on a database, then destroy the originals. Under the Code of Alabama 1975, Section 41-8-10, and the Administrative Code (as cited), registration records "shall not be open for inspection by any agency or individual" except the creating library, APLS ("when necessary to assure the proper operation" of libraries under its jurisdiction), and parents of minors using library materials. Records of an individual patron have no long-term utility after the patron stops using the library's collection and payment for any applicable fines has been received.

- **Circulation Records (4.02).** These records document the circulation of library materials to individual borrowers. They include all information that identifies patrons utilizing particular books or other library materials. Under the Code of Alabama 1975, Section 41-8-10, and the Alabama Administrative Code, Chapter 520-2-1, circulation records are restricted on the same basis described above for registration records. In most public libraries, circulation records are automated as part of an ongoing database. However, once individual items are deaccessioned from the library, circulation information on them has no further use.

- **Circulation and Attendance Reports and Statistics (4.03).** These records document usage of the library and the overall circulation of library materials. Under the Alabama Administrative Code, Chapter 520-1-1, “aggregate statistics shown from registration and circulation records, with all personal identification removed, may be released or used by a library for research and planning purposes.” Compiled on a monthly basis, they are used in preparing the annual statistical report for APLS.
- **Exhibit Files (5.02).** These records document the planning, research, and creation or staging of exhibits at the library. Information includes planning documentation, descriptions of items, catalogs, loan agreements for borrowed items, certificates of insurance, and shipping receipts. Records for routine exhibits of books and library materials are not appraised as permanent, although exhibits of archival and museum holdings will be appraised as permanent in the RDA for local archives and museums (which will also apply to public libraries that hold such materials).

Note: The disposition of various categories of short-term financial records and other records with the former requirement of “Retain 5 years after the end of the fiscal year” in which they were created was revised to “Retain 2 years following audit” at the Local Government Records Commission meeting of October 24, 2003.

II. Permanent Records. The Government Records Division recommends the following library records as permanent:

Acquiring and Maintaining Collections

Permanent documentation of library collection policies and goals is found in Administrative Policies and Procedures (6.03). Although neither is permanent, Accession/Deaccession Logs or Files (1.01) and Donor Files (1.03) also provide long-term documentation of items in public library collections.

Cataloging Collections

Cataloging information for Alabama public library collections is maintained in a national automated database, OCLC, Inc., and shared statewide through the Alabama Interlibrary Catalog (ALICAT).

Sharing Collections Information and Collections

The sharing of Alabama public library collection information is documented through data cataloged in OCLC and made available to other libraries through ALICAT, SOLINET, and similar networks. While individual interlibrary loans are not permanently documented, libraries retain statistics on them and include such statistics in their reports to APLS.

Providing Access to Collections and Reference Assistance

Permanent documentation of library access and reference policies is found in Administrative Policies and Procedures (6.03). Library registration files (4.01) and circulation files (4.02) also provide long-term documentation of this subfunction, although files for individual patrons and holdings are not permanent.

Assisting with Community Education and Activities

- **Educational Program Administrative Files (5.01).** Public libraries may provide educational programs (adult literacy programs, summer reading programs, genealogical workshops, etc.) for various constituencies in their community. Specific activities will vary widely among individual libraries. Information on state- or federally-funded programs will be documented in records covered elsewhere in the RDA, such as grant narrative and financial reports (7.08), annual reports to APLS (6.08), and routine financial records (7.03). Records listed under 5.01 (Educational Program Administrative Files) provide the same documentation for locally-funded programs, and include additional records applicable to educational programs at any funding level.

Administering Internal Operations—Managing the Agency

- **Board Meeting/Hearing Minutes, Agendas, and Packets (6.01).** These records include meeting and hearing minutes of the library board, along with agendas and packet materials (budgets, work plans, reports, and other background information) reviewed by board members prior to meetings. They are essential for documenting the evolution of library policies and procedures as approved by the board.
- **Administrative Policies and Procedures (6.03).** These records provide essential documentation of a variety of issues in library development, such as collection policies and goals; circulation, reference, and other patron concerns; censorship; financial planning; and relations with government or private agencies and library employees. Library policies and procedures may be available in printed form to patrons and the general public.
- **Administrative Correspondence (6.04).** These records include correspondence and related files of the library director, department and branch directors, or other administrative officers concerning library policies and procedures, as well as broad questions of administration. They may also include correspondence with other agencies responsible for overseeing library operations. Administrative correspondence documents the impact of agency decision-makers on policy development.
- **Historical and Publicity Files (6.06).** These records may include press releases, newsletters, brochures, scrapbooks, photographs, videotapes, audiotapes, speeches, and public service announcements designed to publicize events or programs at the library. They document the “public relations” aspect of library operations and, cumulatively, provide an ongoing history of its role in the community.
- **Annual Reports (6.07).** A public library may create annual narrative and/or financial reports describing its activities during a calendar or fiscal year. Such reports provide summary documentation of library functions, projects, and activities, as well as an ongoing history of library operations. These records are distinct from standardized reports submitted to APLS. They may be submitted to the “parent” local government agency (e.g., county commission/city council), published, or retained for the library’s own use.

- **Alabama Public Library Service Reports and Statistics—Five-Year Plans for Library Development (6.08a).** Public libraries periodically submit statistics and reports to APLS, and compliance with APLS reporting requirements may be a condition (if enforced) of their receiving state or federal funds. At the local level, only five-year development plans are appraised as permanent. They assist public libraries in analyzing trends in library development and provide historical “snapshots” of their changing goals. Records documenting the implementation of local libraries’ development plans are retained by APLS and will be appraised under its RDA.
- **Web Sites (6.15).** Public libraries may develop web sites for providing information on such matters as operating hours, collections, and policies; and for responding to patron research requests. The disposition statement calls for permanently preserving a complete copy of the website annually, or as often as significant changes are made.

Administering Internal Operations—Managing Finances

- **Budgeting Records (7.01).** These records document preparing a library budget request package and reporting the status of funds, requesting amendments of allotments, and reporting program performance. Permanent items include copies of final annual budgets approved by the county commission, municipal council, or independent library board (7.01a); and annual financial reports (7.01c).
- **Audit Reports (7.02).** Surprisingly, none of Alabama’s public libraries falls under the scrutiny of the Examiners of Public Accounts. Municipal libraries are audited by their town’s or city’s independent auditor on the same basis as any other department. However, county libraries are *not* audited by the Examiners along with other county agencies. Instead, their boards are responsible for arranging their own audits. The same arrangement applies to regional or other independent libraries. Until fairly recently, APLS insisted that public libraries account for their state funding in a separate audit, but that requirement has been dropped. Normally, APLS does not receive copies of public library audit reports, although the agency may request them if circumstances warrant. Audit reports are appraised as permanent for public libraries, as they have been in RDAs for other agencies of local government.
- **General ledgers (traditional, manually-generated ledgers) (7.03b).** These are the records of final entry for all financial transactions: collecting fines and other revenue, purchasing, investing, administering state and federal funds, and general accounting. Originally, general ledgers were manually created and were appraised as permanent. These records and another financial summary, the detailed year-end trial balance, are now often electronically created. The RDA previously called for printing out a detailed year-end trial balance and retaining it permanently as a “snapshot” general ledger. Most local government computer systems, however, can produce financial summary documents at any time; so a year-end trial balance has no real long-term significance. Audit reports (7.02) and annual financial reports (7.01c) already provide permanent documentation of libraries’ financial practices. Electronically-generated general ledgers and year-end trial balances are therefore proposed here for 10-year retention. Because manually-generated general ledgers usually provide the only financial summaries for the years they cover, their disposition has been left as permanent.

- **State Aid Funds and Expenditures (7.07).** These records document the library’s application for state funds to purchase items or materials, construct facilities, or carry out programs authorized by state or federal authorities. They also document the conduct of such projects and the expenditure of funds. Final narrative reports (7.07b), which summarize the project’s goals and accomplishments, are appraised as permanent.
- **Federal Grant Project Files (7.08).** These records document the library’s application for federal funds to purchase items or materials, construct facilities, or carry out programs authorized by federal authorities. They also document the conduct of grant projects and the expenditure of funds. Final narrative reports (7.08b), which summarize the grant’s goals and accomplishments, are appraised as permanent.

Administering Internal Operations—Managing Human Resources

- **Employee Handbooks (8.04).** These records provide guidance to new employees about personnel rules and other policies and procedures. They offer “snapshot” documentation of the public library’s personnel policies. More detailed information is documented under Administrative Policies and Procedures (6.03).
- **Employee Newsletters (8.05).** Internal newsletters are created for library employees to communicate personnel policies, news of important events, and information on individual employees. They provide additional documentation of library personnel policies over time.
- **Training Records—Training Manuals, Handouts, Films, and Videos (8.13a).** Public libraries may provide training to employees on a variety of topics. These records consist of training materials such as manuals, handouts, films, and videos. They provide insight into the library’s efforts to achieve a well-trained, professional work force.

Administering Internal Operations—Managing Properties, Facilities, and Resources

- **Library Building Construction and Renovation Files—Plans, Specifications, and Blueprints (9.01a).** These records document the design, construction, repair, and renovation of public library buildings and other facilities. Plans, specifications, and blueprints provide important historical documentation of the library’s appearance over time, as well as necessary information for future renovation or construction.

Alabama Public Libraries Permanent Records List

Assisting with Community Education and Activities

1. Educational Program Administrative Files (planning documentation and final narrative reports)

Administering Internal Operations—Managing the Agency

1. Board Meeting/Hearing Minutes, Agendas, and Packets
2. Administrative Policies and Procedures
3. Administrative Correspondence
4. Historical and Publicity Files
5. Annual Reports
6. APLS Reports and Statistics (five-year plans for library development)
7. Web Sites (annual “snapshots”)

Administering Internal Operations—Managing Finances

1. Budgeting Records (approved annual budgets, annual financial reports)
2. Audit Reports
3. General Ledgers (traditional, manually-generated ledgers)
4. State Aid Funds and Expenditures (final narrative reports)
5. Federal Grant Project Files (final narrative reports)

Administering Internal Operations—Managing Human Resources

1. Employee Handbooks
2. Employee Newsletters
3. Training Records—Training Manuals, Handouts, Films, and Videos

Administering Internal Operations—Managing Properties, Facilities, and Resources

1. Library Building Construction and Renovation Files (plans, specifications, and blueprints)

Alabama Public Libraries Records Disposition Authority

This records disposition authority (RDA) is issued by the Local Government Records Commission under authority granted by the Code of Alabama 1975, Section 41-13-5 and 41-13-22 through -24. It was compiled by the Government Records Division, Alabama Department of Archives and History (ADAH), which serves as the commission's staff, in cooperation with representatives from local libraries and the Alabama Public Library Service (APLS). The RDA lists records created and maintained by public libraries in carrying out their mandated function and subfunctions. It establishes retention periods and disposition instructions for those records and provides the legal authority for libraries to implement records destruction.

Alabama law requires public officials to create and maintain records that document the business of their offices. These records must be protected from "mutilation, loss, or destruction," so that they may be transferred to an official's successors in office and made available to members of the public. Records must also be kept in accordance with auditing standards approved by the Examiners of Public Accounts (Code of Alabama 1975, Section 36-12-2, 36-12-4, and 41-5-23). For assistance in implementing this RDA, or for advice on records disposition or other records management concerns, contact the ADAH Government Records Division at (334)242-4452.

Explanation of Records Requirements

- This RDA supersedes any previous records disposition information governing the retention of public library records. Previous versions of this RDA are no longer valid and may not be used for records disposition.
- This RDA establishes retention and disposition instructions for records of public libraries. It does not require the creation of any record not normally created in the conduct of library business, although the creation of certain records may be required by the library's administrative procedures, work responsibilities, audit or reporting requirements, and legislative mandates. Individual public libraries may not necessarily create all of the records listed below. For example, some activities of financial or personnel administration are performed for many libraries by the parent county or municipality.
- This RDA establishes retention and disposition instructions for records listed below, regardless of the medium on which those records may be kept. Electronic mail, for example, is a communications tool that may record permanent or temporary information. As for records in any other format, the retention periods for e-mail records are governed by the requirements of the subfunctions to which the records belong.
- Some temporary records listed within the Administering Internal Operations subfunction of this RDA represent duplicate copies of long-term or permanent records maintained by other agencies.

- Certain other record-related materials need not be retained as records under the disposition requirements in this RDA. Such materials include: (1) duplicate record copies that do not require official action, so long as the creating office maintains the original record for the period required; (2) catalogs, trade journals, and other publications received that require no action and do not document government activities; (3) stocks of blank stationery, blank forms, or other surplus printed materials that are not subject to audit and have become obsolete; (4) transitory records, which are temporary records created for short-term, internal purposes that may include, but are not limited to: telephone call-back messages; drafts of ordinary documents not needed for their evidential value; copies of materials sent for informational purposes but not needed by the receiving office for future business; and internal communications about departmental social activities. They may be disposed of without notice of destruction.
- Any record created or held by the public library that is dated prior to 1900 should be regarded as permanent.

Records Disposition Requirements

This section of the RDA is arranged by subfunction and lists records created and/or maintained by public libraries in carrying out those subfunctions. A library may submit requests to revise specific records disposition requirements, or to create requirements for additional records, to the Local Government Records Commission for consideration at its regular quarterly meetings.

1. Acquiring and Maintaining Collections

<u>No.</u>	<u>Records Title</u>	<u>Disposition</u>
1.01	Accession/Deaccession Logs or Files. These records list books or other items added to or removed from the library's collection. They include item descriptions and acquisition information, but not financial documentation such as purchase orders.	Retain until superseded or no longer useful.
1.02	Shelf Lists and Finding Aids. These records provide an inventory and location index of all library holdings. They assist library staff in physically locating books and other items in the library's collections.	Retain until superseded or no longer useful.

<u>No.</u>	<u>Records Title</u>	<u>Disposition</u>
1.03	Donor Files. These records document all gifts of books, other items, or money to the library by private individuals or corporations. They may include the names of donors, descriptions of donated items, reasons for donations, and correspondence with donors and donors' families. Disposition is as follows:	
a.	Donated books or other collection items	Retain until the donated item is deaccessioned from the library.
b.	Monetary donations (lists of donors; documentation on individual donations)	Retain for useful life.
1.04	Local Government Records Depository Agreements. These records are formal agreements executed between the public library and local government agencies for the library to accept physical custody of public records (including county newspapers) that are still legally in the custody of the donating agency. They include a list of all deposited items. (<u>Note:</u> Depository agreements must be approved by the Local Government Records Commission. For information, contact ADAH.)	Retain 10 years after termination of the agreement.

2. Cataloging Collections

<u>No.</u>	<u>Records Title</u>	<u>Disposition</u>
2.01	Cataloging Data and Card Files. These records document the cataloging of library holdings in OCLC or other standard bibliographical formats. Cataloging records may include data entry worksheets, separate databases of independent or regional library holdings; and card catalogs retained for convenience or to document items that were never cataloged electronically. Disposition is as follows:	
a.	Data entry worksheets	Retain until verification of data in cataloging database.

<u>No.</u>	<u>Records Title</u>	<u>Disposition</u>
2.01	b. Databases of independent or regional library collections	Retain until superseded or no longer useful.
	c. Card files (card catalogs)	Retain until verification of all data in cataloging database. Once data has been verified, retain card files for useful life.

3. Sharing Collections Information and Collections

<u>No.</u>	<u>Records Title</u>	<u>Disposition</u>
3.01	Interlibrary Loan Records. These records document the public library's loaning or borrowing of books and other items that are requested by its patrons or those of other libraries.	Retain for 3 years after the item is returned or replaced.

4. Providing Access to Collections and Reference Assistance

<u>No.</u>	<u>Records Title</u>	<u>Disposition</u>
4.01	Registration Files. These records document patrons' applications for library cards and preserve identifying information on individual borrowers. They are restricted records under the provisions of Section 41-8-10 of the Code of Alabama 1975. <u>Note:</u> If application information is retained on microfilm or in a database, the original paper applications may be destroyed.	Retain 2 years after the end of the fiscal year in which the patron last used the library's collections.

<u>No.</u>	<u>Records Title</u>	<u>Disposition</u>
4.02	Circulation Files. These records document the circulation of library materials to individual borrowers. They include all information that identifies patrons utilizing particular books or other library materials. These records are restricted under the provisions of Section 41-8-10 of the Code of Alabama 1975.	Retain for useful life.
4.03	Circulation and Attendance Reports and Statistics. These records document usage of the library and the overall circulation of library materials. They include Monthly Circulation and Attendance Reports and may be used in preparing the annual statistical report to APLS.	Retain 1 year.

5. Assisting with Community Education and Activities

<u>No.</u>	<u>Records Title</u>	<u>Disposition</u>
5.01	Educational Program Administrative Files. These records document library educational programs for various community constituencies (such as reading programs, workshops, etc.).	
a.	Planning documentation and final narrative reports (locally-funded programs)	PERMANENT
b.	Financial reports and routine financial records (locally-funded programs). See section 7 of the RDA for further definition of financial records.	Retain 2 years following audit.
c.	Participant registration information	Retain until completion of final narrative report.
d.	Program evaluation forms	Retain until completion of final narrative report.

<u>No.</u>	<u>Records Title</u>	<u>Disposition</u>
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5.02 Exhibit Files. These records document the planning, research, and creation or staging of exhibits at the library. Information includes planning documentation, descriptions of items, catalogs, loan agreements for borrowed items, certificates of insurance, and shipping receipts. Disposition is as follows:

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| a. | Planning documentation, exhibit catalog (sample) | Retain for useful life. |
| b. | Loan agreements, certificates of insurance | Retain 10 years after return of loaned or borrowed item. |
| c. | Correspondence, shipping receipts, and other routine financial records | See sections 6 and 7 of the RDA. |

6. Administering Internal Operations—Managing the Agency

<u>No.</u>	<u>Records Title</u>	<u>Disposition</u>
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6.01	Board Meeting/Hearing Minutes, Agendas, and Packets. These records are meeting and hearing minutes of the library board, along with agendas and packet materials (budgets, work plans, reports, and other background information) reviewed by board members prior to meetings. They document the evolution of library policies and procedures as approved by the board.	PERMANENT
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6.02	Recordings of Board Meetings. Audio or video recordings provide a verbatim account of discussion at library board meetings. They are normally used only as an aid to preparation of the minutes.	Retain until minutes are approved.
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6.03	Administrative Policies and Procedures. These records provide essential documentation of a variety of issues in library development, such as collection policies and goals; circulation, reference, and other patron concerns; censorship; financial planning, and relations with government or private agencies and library employees.	PERMANENT
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<u>No.</u>	<u>Records Title</u>	<u>Disposition</u>
6.04	Administrative Correspondence. These records include correspondence and related files of the library director, department and branch directors, or other administrative officers concerning library policies and procedures, as well as broad questions of administration. They may also include correspondence with other agencies that oversee library operations.	PERMANENT
6.05	Administrative Reference Files. These records include materials, not created by the library, that are collected and used only as reference sources of information.	Retain for useful life.
6.06	Historical and Publicity Files. These records may include press releases, newsletters, scrapbooks, brochures, photographs, videotapes, audiotapes, speeches, and public service announcements designed to publicize events or programs at the library.	PERMANENT
6.07	Annual Reports. Public libraries may create annual narrative and/or financial reports describing their activities during a calendar or fiscal year. Such reports provide summary documentation of library functions, projects, and activities, as well as an ongoing history library operations. These records are distinct from reports provided to APLS.	PERMANENT
6.08	Alabama Public Library Service Reports and Statistics. Libraries periodically submit statistics and reports to APLS. Compliance with APLS reporting requirements may be a condition of the receipt of state or federal funds. The following dispositions apply to the library's copies of such records:	
	a. Five-year plans for library development	PERMANENT
	b. Annual updates and statistical reports	Retain 5 years.
	c. Other reports and statistics	Retain 1 year.
	d. Data entry forms	Retain until approval of applicable report.

<u>No.</u>	<u>Records Title</u>	<u>Disposition</u>
6.09	Routine Correspondence. This type of correspondence documents the daily conduct of library operations in contacts with patrons, other governmental agencies, local organizations or businesses, and the general public. Routine correspondence relates to such “everyday” matters as answering inquiries and providing information, rather than to library policy development or issues of long-term administrative impact.	Retain 2 years following audit.
6.10	Legal Case Files. These records document lawsuits filed against the public library.	Retain 6 years after the case is closed.
6.11	Mailing Lists. These records include various standard lists of names and addresses used by library staff members.	Retain for useful life.
6.12	Telephone Logs and Fax Machine Logs. These records are lists of telephone and fax machine contacts and related data.	Retain for useful life.
6.13	Calendars. These records include desk calendars and other scheduling devices for library personnel.	Retain 1 year.
6.14	Records Management Documentation	
a.	Records documenting implementation of the public library’s approved RDA. These records include records management plans, records inventories, records finding aids, and records destruction notices.	Retain 2 years following audit.
b.	Copy of approved RDA. The RDA provides legal guidelines for the disposition of all library records. The public library should maintain a signed copy of its RDA and may disperse duplicate copies as needed.	Retain 2 years following audit.

<u>No.</u>	<u>Records Title</u>	<u>Disposition</u>
6.15	Websites. Public libraries may develop websites for providing information on such matters as operating hours, collections, and policies; and for responding to patron research requests.	PERMANENT Preserve a complete copy of website annually, or as often as significant changes are made.

- 6.16 **Computer Systems Documentation.** These files include hardware and software manuals and diskettes, warranties, and Y2K records.

Disposition: Retain former system documentation 2 years after the audit period in which the former hardware and software no longer exist anywhere in the agency and all permanent records have been migrated to the new system.

7. Administering Internal Operations—Managing Finances

<u>No.</u>	<u>Records Title</u>	<u>Disposition</u>
7.01	Budgeting Records. These records document preparing a library budget request package and reporting the status of funds, requesting amendments of allotments, and reporting program performance.	
a.	Approved annual budgets. These are final library budgets as approved by the independent library board, county commission, or municipal council.	PERMANENT
b.	Records documenting budget performance during the budget cycle (budgeted and actual revenue reports, revenue reports, investment reports, expenditure reports, encumbrance reports, etc.)	Retain 2 years following audit.
c.	Annual financial reports	PERMANENT
7.02	Audit Reports. These records document the library's overall financial condition during each audit period.	PERMANENT

<u>No.</u>	<u>Records Title</u>	<u>Disposition</u>
7.03	Accounting Records	
a.	Routine accounting records. These are records of original entry for routine accounting transactions, such as lists of fines collected, journals, registers, ledgers, receipts, bank statements, deposit slips, canceled checks, etc.	Retain 2 years following audit.
b.	General ledgers (traditional, manually-generated ledgers). These are records of final entry for all financial transactions: collecting fines and other revenue, purchasing, investing, administering state and federal funds, and general accounting.	PERMANENT
c.	Electronically-generated general ledgers and detailed year-end trial balances	Retain 10 years after the end of the fiscal year in which the records were created.
7.04	Purchasing Records. These records document the requisitioning and purchasing of supplies and equipment, receipting and invoicing for goods, and authorizing payment for products.	Retain 2 years following audit.
7.05	Contracts, Leases, and Agreements. These records document the negotiation, fulfillment, and termination of all contracts, leases, and agreements entered into by the public library, including final contracts that are subject to the bid process.	Retain 10 years after expiration of the contract (Code of Alabama 1975, Section 6-2-33).
7.06	Records of Formal Bids. These records document the bid process, including the library's requests for proposals and unsuccessful responses from service vendors.	Retain 7 years after the date bids were opened (Code of Alabama 1975, Section 41-16-62).

<u>No.</u>	<u>Records Title</u>	<u>Disposition</u>
7.07	State Aid Funds and Expenditures. These records document the library's application for state funds to purchase items or materials, construct facilities, or carry out programs authorized by state or federal authorities. They also document the conduct of such projects and the expenditure of funds, and may include correspondence with APLS regarding project administration. a. Financial records, interim reports, and supporting documentation. These records include background materials, interim narrative reports, financial reports, correspondence, and other supporting documentation for expenditure of funds awarded. Also included are records relating to unsuccessful applications. b. Final narrative reports. Final narrative reports are submitted according to the requirements of the funding agency. They summarize the goals of the project, how the money was used, and what was accomplished.	Retain 6 years after submission of final financial report or denial of application. PERMANENT
7.08	Federal Grant Project Files. These records document the library's application for federal funds to purchase items or materials, construct facilities, or carry out programs authorized by federal authorities. They also document the conduct of grant projects and the expenditure of funds, and may include correspondence with APLS regarding grant administration. a. Financial records, interim reports, and supporting documentation. These records include background materials, interim narrative reports, financial reports, correspondence, and other supporting documentation for the expenditure of grant funds awarded. Also included are records relating to unsuccessful applications. b. Final narrative reports. Final narrative reports are submitted according to the requirements of the funding agency. They summarize the goals of the grant, how the money was used, and what was accomplished.	Retain 6 years after submission of final financial report or denial of application. PERMANENT
7.09	Travel Records. These records document requests by library personnel for authorization to travel on official business, and related materials such as travel reimbursement, forms and itineraries.	Retain 2 years following audit.

8. Administering Internal Operations—Managing Human Resources

<u>No.</u>	<u>Records Title</u>	<u>Disposition</u>
8.01	Job Classifications and Pay Plans. These files document job classifications and pay rates for all positions covered by the library's personnel system. They include the qualifications, duties, and pay range, for each library position.	Retain 4 years after position is reclassified.
8.02	Job Recruitment Materials. These records document efforts by the public library to advertise positions and attract qualified personnel.	Retain 2 years following audit.
8.03	Employment Applications. These are applications by individuals for employment in county positions.	.
	a. Successful Applications	Retain in employee personnel file.
	b. Unsuccessful Applications	Retain 3 years
8.04	Employee Handbooks. These records provide guidance to new employees about personnel rules and other policies and procedures.	PERMANENT
8.05	Employee Newsletters. Internal newsletters are created for library employees to communicate personnel policies, news of important events, and information on individual employees.	PERMANENT
8.06	Employee Personnel Files. These records document each library employee's work history; they are generally maintained as case files. A file may include information on an employee's training, performance evaluations, disciplinary actions, promotions and demotions, and awards.	Retain 6 years after separation of employee.
8.07	Employee Work Schedules. These records document the daily and weekly work schedules of all library employees.	Retain 2 years following audit.

<u>No.</u>	<u>Records Title</u>	<u>Disposition</u>
8.08	Leave and Attendance Records. These records document the attendance and leave status of library personnel, both generally and for individual employees.	
a.	Individual employee leave and attendance records (including time sheets). These are records documenting hours worked, leave earned, and leave taken by individual library employees.	Retain 2 years following audit.
b.	Employee cumulative leave/attendance records. These records document the final leave status (cumulative leave) of individual library employees.	Retain 6 years after separation of employee.
c.	Employee Sick Leave Donation Records. These records document the donation of sick leave to their colleagues by library employees.	Retain 2 years following audit.
8.09	Payroll Records. These records document library payrolls, as well as pay status and payroll deductions for individual employees.	
a.	Annual payroll earnings reports/records documenting payroll deductions for tax purposes. These are summaries of employees' earnings during a fiscal year, including all deductions and federal Form 941.	Retain 50 years after the end of the tax year in which the records were created.
b.	Records documenting library payrolls. These records include pre-payroll reports, payroll check registers, payroll action forms, payroll/overtime certification reports, etc.	Retain 2 years following audit.
c.	Records documenting payroll deduction authorizations. These records document payroll deductions for taxes (including W-2 forms), retirement and insurance contributions, and all other deductions withheld from the pay of individual employees.	Retain 6 years after separation of employee.
d.	Employee "cafeteria plan" (flexible benefits) records. These records document salary-reduction type plans authorized by the U.S. Internal Revenue Service, Section 125.	
	General information about the plan	Retain until superseded.

<u>No.</u>	<u>Records Title</u>	<u>Disposition</u>
8.09	d. (cont'd) Employee applications, correspondence, enrollment cards and files	Retain 6 years after termination of the plan.
8.10	Employee Insurance Program Enrollment and Claims Files. These files document the library's efforts to assist employees and their dependents to enroll in health/life insurance programs.	
	a. General information on the program	Retain until superseded.
	b. Employee applications, correspondence, and enrollment cards and files	Retain 4 years after program termination or employee separation.
	c. Employee claims files	Retain 2 years following audit.
8.11	Workmen's Compensation Insurance Claim Files. These files document all claims pertaining to work-related injuries or diseases made by library employees. (See Code of Alabama 1975, Section 25-5-4.)	Retain 12 years and after the end of the fiscal year in which the transaction occurred.
8.12	Unemployment Compensation Files. These files provide documentation related to employee claims for unemployment compensation.	Retain 2 years following audit.
8.13	Family Medical Leave Act (FMLA) Records. These records document administration of the federal Family Medical Leave program, including leave taken, premium payments, employer notices, and correspondence.	Retain 2 years following audit.

<u>No.</u>	<u>Records Title</u>	<u>Disposition</u>
8.13	Training Records. These records document the library's provision of in-service training and professional development for its employees, including workshop records and evaluations. Disposition is as follows:	
a.	Training manuals, handouts, films, and videos. These are materials created by the library to provide training to its employees. They do not include materials obtained from outside sources or materials already designated as permanent, such as policies and procedures manuals. <u>Note:</u> So long as the library permanently maintains a copy of these materials, duplicate copies may be destroyed when no longer needed.	PERMANENT
b.	Training files. These records document training provided to new and veteran employees. They may include lists of attendees at workshops or training sessions.	Retain 10 years.
c.	Appraisals of training. These records are completed by attendees at training sessions to rate the effectiveness of the training provided.	Retain for useful life.

9. Administering Internal Operations—Managing Properties, Facilities, and Resources

<u>No.</u>	<u>Records Title</u>	<u>Disposition</u>
9.01	Library Building Construction and Renovation Files. These files document the design, construction, repair, and renovation of library buildings and other facilities. Included may be building specifications and floor plans, plans of proposed work, lists of materials, correspondence, memoranda, reports, blueprints, site plans, elevation details, and financial records. Disposition is as follows:	
a.	Plans, specifications, and blueprints	PERMANENT
b.	All other records	Retain for life of building.

<u>No.</u>	<u>Records Title</u>	<u>Disposition</u>
9.02	Space Management Plans/Records of Space Assignments. These records document the assignment of office space in library buildings and facilities. They include operating plans for the assignment of such space.	Retain until superseded or no longer useful.
9.03	Annual Inventory Records. These records document all personal property, equipment, or capital outlay by the public library on an annual basis.	Retain 2 years following audit.
9.04	Receipts of Responsibility for Property. These records document the temporary use or possession of the library's property by its employees.	Retain until return of item to property manager.
9.05	Facilities/Building Maintenance Work Orders. These records document routine maintenance activities in library buildings and facilities.	Retain 1 year.
9.06	Facilities/Building Inspection Records. These records document the routine safety and maintenance inspection of library buildings and facilities, and such potentially dangerous items as furnaces, elevators, electronic doors, etc.	Retain 5 years.
9.07	Facilities/Buildings Security Records. These records document the library's efforts to provide security to members of the public using its buildings and facilities, as well as to monitor the admission of visitors to these areas. They may include sign-in sheets for visitors, alarm system log sheets, and records documenting security staff's responses to alarms or emergencies.	Retain 3 years.
9.08	Motor Pool Use Records. These records document the use of motor pool vehicles by library employees.	Retain 2 years following audit.

<u>No.</u>	<u>Records Title</u>	<u>Disposition</u>
9.09	Parking Records. These records document the use of library parking facilities by employees or visitors. They may include parking permits, cards, and applications for these items.	Retain 2 years following audit.
9.10	Vehicle and Equipment Maintenance Files. These records document the maintenance of all vehicles and other equipment owned or maintained by the public library.	Retain 2 years following audit.
9.11	Long-Distance Telephone Logs. These records document use of the library's long-distance telephone systems by employees during business hours.	Retain 2 years following audit.

Requirement and Recommendations for Implementing the Records Disposition Authority

Under the Code of Alabama 1975, Section 41-13-23, “no county, municipal, or other local government official, shall cause any . . . record to be destroyed or otherwise disposed of without first obtaining the approval of the local government records commission.” This RDA constitutes authorization by the Local Government Records Commission to dispose of records as stipulated, with the condition that the responsible official must submit a Local Government Records Destruction Notice to the ADAH Government Records Division to document the destruction. The ADAH, which serves as the commission’s staff, retains local records destruction documentation as a permanent record. (For more information, see the ADAH procedural leaflet “Records Destruction Procedures for Local Governments.”)

In addition to authorizing a procedure for legally destroying temporary records, the Local Government Records Commission urges the public library to establish a record-keeping program in order to meet its legal and public service needs. Such a program should include the following activities:

- The library director, or a designated records officer, should establish a records management liaison in each library branch or department. The records officer and liaisons should be responsible for ensuring the regular implementation of this RDA, maintaining records in compliance with national and state standards, and coordinating the destruction to disposable records.
- Permanent records in the public library’s custody will be maintained under proper intellectual control and in an environment that will ensure their physical order and preservation. In addition to records appraised as permanent in the RDA, the Local Government Records has classified all records created prior to 1900 as permanent.
- Destruction of temporary records, as authorized in this RDA, should occur agency-wide on a regular basis—for example, after the successful completion of an audit, at the end of an administration, or at the end of a fiscal year. Despite the RDA’s provisions, no record should be destroyed that is necessary to comply with requirements of the state Sunset Act, audit requirements, or any legal notice or subpoena.
- The public library should maintain full documentation of any computerized record-keeping system it employs. It should develop procedures for: (1) backing up all permanent records held in electronic format; (2) storing a back-up copy off-site; and (3) migrating all permanent records when the system is upgraded or replaced. If the library chooses to maintain records solely in electronic format, it is committed to funding any system upgrades and migration strategies necessary to ensure the records’ permanent preservation and accessibility for the period legally required.
- Microforms of permanent records should conform to quality standards set by the American National Standards Institute (ANSI) and the Association for Image and Information Management (AIIM). According to the Code of Alabama 1975, Section 41-13-44, no microfilmed

record may be legally destroyed “until the microfilm copy has been processed and checked with the original for accuracy.” Government Records Division staff may examine agency microfilm for compliance prior to destruction of the original records.

- The public library should notify the ADAH Government Records Division of any significant changes in its records storage conditions or records management procedures. It may also contact the division to request revision of its RDA. Normally, RDA revisions will be submitted to the Local Government Records Commission every two years. ADAH Government Records Division staff will notify the library of any commission-approved changes in record-keeping requirements that affect all public libraries.

The staff of the Local Government Records Commission may examine the condition of permanent records maintained in the library’s custody and inspect records destruction documentation. Government Records Division archivists are available to instruct library staff in RDA implementation or otherwise assist the library in implementing its records management program.

The Local Government Records Commission adopted this revised Records Disposition Authority on October 24, 2003.

By: _____ Date: _____
Edwin C. Bridges, Chairman, by Tracey Berezansky

By: _____ Date: _____
Director
_____ Public Library